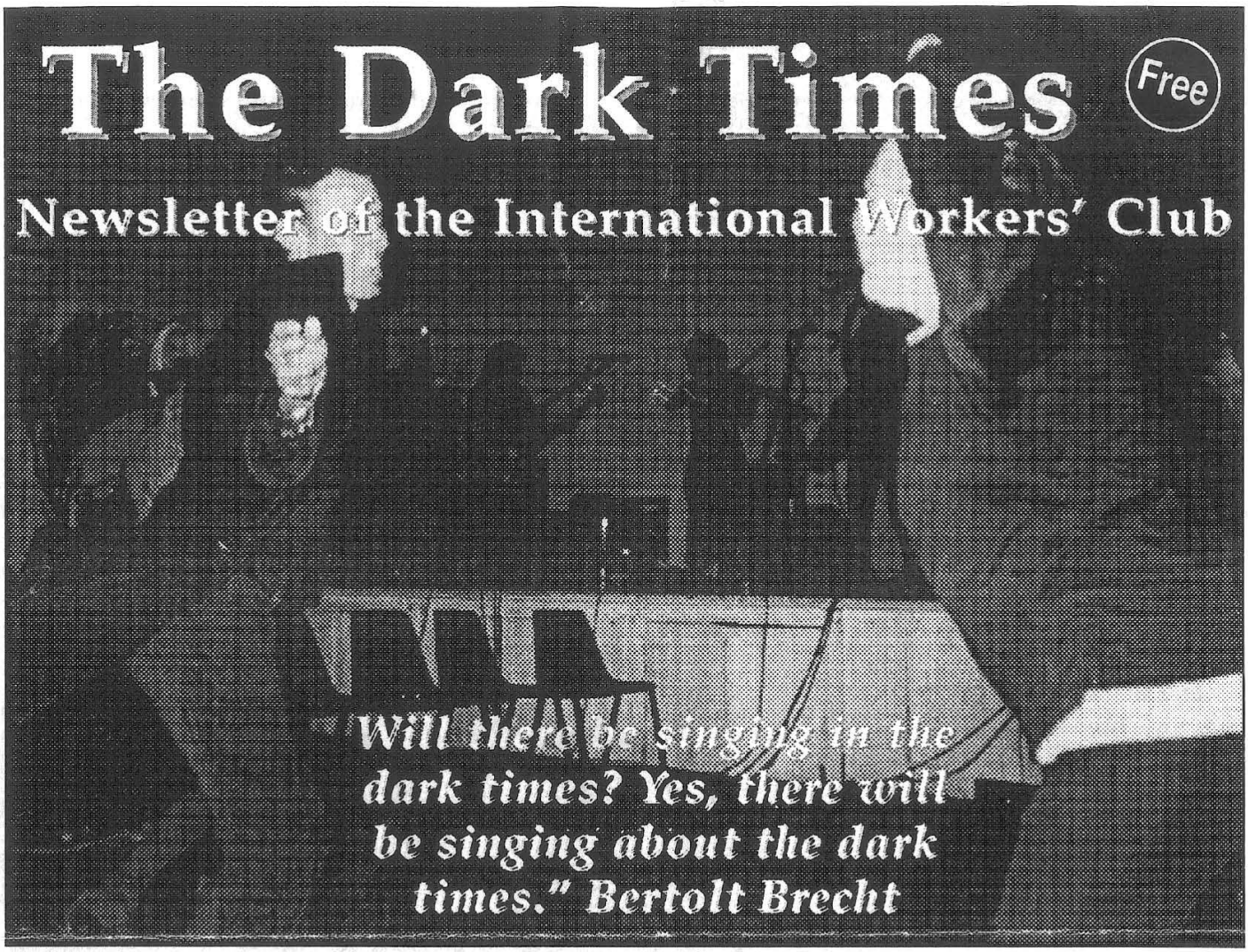
The Dark Times

Free

Newsletter of the International Workers' Club



Imagine a warehouse space in Brunswick free of yobbos, power-heads, sexists, racists, homophobes and other nasties. One that had a delicious vegan/vegetarian cafe self managed and full of healthy, delicious food at low prices. One that had an all ages venue run by its members and geared towards providing great entertainment and supporting bands rather than just making loads of cash for beer companies. One that had office facilities for grassroots activist groups. One that had an alternative anti profit bookshop, a darkroom and other creative facilities. One that had an open space available for community groups to use for workshops, theatre rehearsals, meetings, etc. One that would be anti-hierarchy where all participants had an equal say...

A group of us have been working for the last few years to try to bring these desires into reality and creat an anti-authoritarian community warehouse in the inner city area. Whilst progress has been slow primarily due to the fact that most of us involved are on a low income we've had a lot of fun putting on fundraisers and have raised several thousand dollars towards the project and are now in the process of buying a P.A. In recent times interest in the warehouse project has picked up and we now have three basic collectives involved in raising money and organising the basics for opening a space. These collectives include: The Black Star Club (gigs and venue), The Food Collective (cafe and food stalls) and the I.W.C. collective (coordinating and looking at warehouses). There is also the possibility of a bookstore collective and a variety of community groups getting involved. Currently these collectives are raising money for the project and getting people involved. They are also trying to provide some of the things we hope will be a feature of the warehouse (eg. low cost gigs, cheap vegie food).

There's only one way this warehouse space will come about and that's if you get involved! All the collectives meet regularly so come along and help make these dreams a reality.

The Black Star Club Report

Do you think it odd that one can mostly only see bands play in pubs? Do you find yourself liking the music but hating the venue? Do you hate having to deal with pub managers who are more interested in the money they make than the music? Hate playing in venues which are more geared to selling beer than playing and listening to music? Well the Black Star Club is hoping the provide an alternative venue in Melbourne which is free of these concerns.

The Black Star Club is one of the collectives involved in the International Worker's Club warehouse project, of which a venue will be a part. In concordance with the guidelines of the whole project we hope to provide a space free of harrassment and discrimination based on gender, race, age or sexual preference. A space which will be available to all musical forms, to dance, to cinema, or to whatever use it can be put. Use of the space will only be contingent upon the guidelines of the whole warehouse and otherwise interference will be minimal.

The primary significance of the venue (and this is what will give the venue it unique feel) is that it will be completely run by the Club itself. This means that there is no-one driven by the profit motive determining how the space is used by what makes the most money. Anyone involved in the Club will have a say in what happens in the space and how the venue is run. We will try to provide an environment appropriate to the events staged. The venue will be equipped with stage, lights and P.A., and available at a low cost.

At the moment the Black Star Club is raising the intial costs to commence such a project. Our major effort has been at raising money, but by doing so in a way close as possible to that which the Club will eventually run.

Some recent fund raising events by the Black Star Club include a Medieval Night comprising a vegetarian banquent and entertainment. The whole night took place in a huge candle-lit hall decorated with greenery and medieval paraphernalia. We were treated to a fire and juggling display. Music for the evening consisted of the folk sounds of The Crabapples, medieval madrigals from Pumpernickel, and to complete an evening of much merriment, Munity played their own brand of punky folk songs. Thank you to all those who came along, especially those in costume, for making it such a wonderful night.

MUNITY AT THE MEDIEVAL NIGHT

On a different note altogether was the all ages bash in a warehouse in Brunswick. The Uncaged Rampage featured Crank, DollJuice, Gudgeon, Mouth and Christbait. It was well attended by both young and old alike. Delicious food was provided by the Food Collective (see article in this newsletter), a facet we hope will become a feature at all our future events. Thank you to Paul and co. for letting us use their place, and thanks to all those who showed up.

In the forthcoming months we will be organising a lunchtime event at Melbourne University on Tuesday April 26th. There will be music featuring Peachfuzz and acoustic acts as well as poets. There will also be a food table and an information table. Also look out for Mouth's CD launch which will also be another all ages Black Star Club event. And on May 1st we will be hav-

ing a May Day gig after the march at the Empress. We will also be staging a techno dance party with Friends of the Earth. And finally an art auction in June at the Empress. Anyone willing to donate works for sale please contact us. Formore details of these events see the back page of this newsletter.

We also soon intend to buy our own P.A. We have be given some money from the I.W.C. for this purpose and money from our forthcoming gigs will go to this cause. When we have our own P.A. we intend to hire it out and also put on more gigs in halls and warehouses. If anyone knows of a P.A. in good condition at a reasonable price please let us know.

We are also seeking graphics for Black Star Club T-shirts. If you can draw or have any ideas please send us designs.

If you are interested in events like these or any other events you think the Black Star Club could organise then please get in touch. We meet every Moday at 7.30pm at the Napier Hotel. If you are in a band and would like to do a benefit gig for us you can contact us either at one of our meeting or on (03) 376 7697 and (03) 328 0025.

A big thankyou to the following bands who have played our fund-raisers: Munity, Crank, Christbait, Gudgeon, Mouth, DollJuice, Stoop, Punk is Fucked, Hecate, Mavis's, Jane McCracken, Spot the Beast, Acid Moon, Psych Carni, Oxblood, and any others who have slipped our mind (sorry).

THE MEDIEVAL FEAST

The Crabapples, Sea Haggs, Pumpernickel, Mad Mother from Hell, Unhinged, Milk Moustache, Babel, Shrieking Violets, Life Drill, Womnal, Two Year Olds, Lung U.P.C., Bean Flipper, Headcase, Mull Grinder,

THE FOOD COLLECTIVE REPORT

The main aim of the Food collective is to provide some kind of vegetarian/vegan (and preferably organic) food service at the Warehouse when it opens. To the best of our knowledge no other collectively run, anti-profit Vego cafe/food service currently exists in Melbourne and we'd like to see one happen. Ultimately we hope to set up a cafe with a coffee machine and small kitchen, but as this will take alot of time and money we hope to slowly build up to it by having stalls at markets and catering for gigs. This way we can raise money and gather together things like plates, glasses, etc. There has also been some talk of calling ourselves "The Pirate Cafe."

Our first stall at melbourne Uni was quite successful and encouraging. We all had a good time and made $90 selling delicious burritos. Since then we have catered for the UnCaged Rampage All Ages gig where we made cakes, rice balls, pakoras and more burritos. We also did food for Mutiny's last gig at Banjos which was hard work, but was well appreciated by everyone.

The next event we plan to do food for is a lunch time gig at Melbourne Uni on 26th April where Peachfuzz and Andrew Cuddlefish will be playing. An info stall will be set up and we'll be selling cheap beer as well. We should be doing future stalls at the Uni and around town as well as at Black star benefits. If anyone wants to help us out or get more info then please get in touch with us at (03) 419 0430.

What's Coming Up

Tuesday April 26th Peachfuzz and Andrew Cuddlefish are playing a free gig at Melbourne University in the North Court from 12.30 pm. The Food Collective will be selling delicious vegan food and hopefully there will also be an alternative book stall.

Sunday May 1st May Day march and book stall then a celebration at the Empress Hotel, cnr Nicholson and Scotchmer Sts., Nth Fitzroy, from 7.30pm to 11pm. Entry only $3 with The Sea Haggs, James Brook, Milk Moustache and The Incredible Shrinking Mad Mothers From Hell performing. All proceeds to Black Star Club.

Late May Mouth CD launch and All Ages Black Star benefit. Should be a huge show. Other bands include Guttersnipes, Hecate and Bugbears. Venue to be confirmed.

Friday May 27th D Day 1994, the dance part. Melbourne University, Student Union Building. Featuring Snog, Zen Paradox, Non Bossy Posse, Lung UPC, and a number of Melbournes leading DJs. All night rave. Joint benefit Friends of the Earth and Black Star Club. Further information contact (03) 419 8700.

Late May/Mid June Monster Art Auction at the Empress Hotel on a Sunday afternoon to raise money for the warehouse project. Numerous artists and a few bands too! Contact Christine on (03) 489 5018 for details.

May/June/July The Food Collective will be holding regular food stalls at Melbourne Uni on Tuesdays and at various other places around Melbourne to raise money for the Cafe. Contact (03) 419 0430.

Black Star Club, Food Collective and the Warehouse Project hold regular meetings. Ring (03) 388 0025 and (03) 376 7697 for details.

Celebrate May Day '94

Most of us associate May Day with boring trade union bureaucats, robotic lefty paper sellers, endless pointless speeches and all the other crap that goes on. The march is rarely if ever actually on May 1st as Union bosses are too afraid that people would actually take a day off work and year after year the march gets smaller as fewer and fewer people are informed as to what its all about. Well this year a bunch of us want to something different and actually make a day of the thing.

The May Day march and celebrations have their origins in the labour struggles of the 1880's. Grim times these with starvation wages, harsh conditions, racist, sexist and dangerous workplaces and the basic out and out exploitation of ordinary people (not so different to much of the world nowadays really). In response to this people throughout the world organised in their communitys to help each other out through the hard times and fight back against their bosses through strikes, sabotage and other means. In Chicago, 1886, huge strikes were underway in several factories and repression was harsh with police attacking and firing upon pickets and strikers. On the 3rd May a protest was held against this government violence and towards the end of the rally the police savagely attacked the crowd. As the police marched on the crowd a bomb was thrown in defence and in the ensuing fracas seven cops were killed and possibly three times that number of demonstrators. In the following weeks police framed seven anarchists for the bombing. Although there was no evidence linking the seven to the bombing the show trial was intended to break the anarchist and labour movement and sentenced 6 to death and one to 15 years in jail (one man later commited suicide before his execution). Years later an inquiry held by the Governor concluded that the trial had been judicial murder.

The effect of this obvious frameup and murder was rather than scaring people away from action a whole generation of people were spurned into action against an oppressive system and in defence of the (soon to be) Haymarket martyrs. Soon after their deaths it was decided that May 1st would both commemorate their murder and celebrate the ongoing fight. Unlike what we hear today this was not just a fight for better conditions, Trade Unions and the 8 hour day, but rather an attempt to get rid of the system altogether and have a no hour day with life based on pleasure for all not profits for the few. May day was to be a celebration of the actions of people against oppression and boredom of workaday life and a remembrance of those brave folks who had fought in the past not a boring march around the block.

As a sidenote May Day should also be remembered for its original significance—the ancient European pagan celebration of rebirth, fertility, the new spring and spiritual connection with the earth. May day or Beltain as it was known then was generally a huge party/festival with everyone having a great time in anticipation of bountiful crops, food and a good year. The Christians naturally when they came to power attempted to stomp out such earth loving, partying activity, but Beltain lives on regardless.

Workers of the World... Relax!

Join us at the march at 2pm, 1st May at the 8 Hour Monument corner of Victoria Parade and Lygon Street. Look out for the Black Star banner and people having fun then check out the alternative Book Stall later at the park. After all the excitement come down to the Empress for a night of entertainment.